PENINSULA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB INC.
www.peninsulafieldnaturalists.org.au

September 2025 Newsletter

Excursion reports

Greens Bush Long Point Circuit - 14 June 2025

Text and photos: Lee Denis (text and photos) and Jared Jones (text).

Most of us had not been to this location for a considerable time, although we had visited the Baldrys Circuit on the other side of the park quite often. Nine members started from the end of Long Point road; a few hundred metres took us to the entrance to the National Park; then we headed along the circuit track to the junction with the Two Bays Walking Track, just above Lightwood Creek. The official Long Point Circuit Track then heads south along the Two Bays Track, but we elected to head north towards the Lightwood Creek campground, then branched off along Lightwood Track which took us to Rogers Road on the east side of the park, thence back to our starting point. The walk was full of interest but at the end we were already planning the next excursion to look at some different parts of the park.

Eastern yellow robin

Bassian thrush

The vegetation varies from a Eucalypt woodland on the higher sections to a profuse fern gully along the Creek; both Soft and Rough Tree-ferns were seen, the undersides of their fronds covered with the sori that contain the spores by which the generations alternate. The False Bracken was likewise heavy with spores. Along the way we had several close encounters with Bassian Thrushes foraging along the track; a koala was spotted along the creek, together with Swamp Wallaby and Eastern Grey Kangaroos. The bird count was low, but included Varied Sitellas, White-throated Treecreeper, numerous Crimson Rosellas, a Wedge-tailed Eagle, and several honeyeaters including Crescent, and White-eared. The main feature, however, was the abundance of fungi.

Phlebopus marginatus

Thanks mainly to fungi enthusiast Jared, we were able to compile quite a list. Most spectacular was a group of Salmon Gum Fungi *Phlebopus marginatus*, a bolete that has pores rather than gills, with caps 30 to 40 cm across; this is actually a mycorrhizal species that forms a symbiotic relationship with Eucalypts. Others included a number of species of *Geastrum* (Earth Stars), *Scleroderma*, (puffballs) and *Pisolithus* (Horse-dung Fungus), several *Mycenas* e.g. *M cystidiosis*, the tallest of the genus; species of *Cortinarius* e.g. *C. austrovenetus* with an olive-green cap (pileus) and mustard-yellow gills; a species of *Macrolepiota;* the tiny yellow lichenised fungus associated with moss *Lichenomphalia chromacea*, some species of *Amanita*, and the large white shelf fungus called White Punk (*Laetiporus portentosus*). There were

Genus Pisolithus

also some we couldn't identify including a peculiar specimen of the type that release their spores by erosion, similar to the Horse-dung Fungus but on a stalk.

Subsequent to the excursion Jared identified this fungus as being in the genus of the "horse dung fungus" Pisolithus, but the stalked characteristic, which is quite rare. It is likely that the specimens found are very closely related/barely distinguishable to the populations of "regular" looking Pisolithus, otherwise it could also just be a new species or an uncommon characteristic shown in a common species. Jared has made similar observations on iNaturalist and had agreements on Pisolithus ID but no suggestions towards a species ID. Other fungi species Jared recalled were *Rhodocollybia eucalyptorum* and *Lepiota haemorrhagica*.

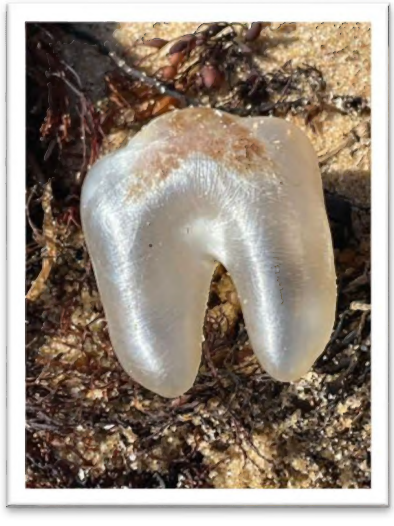
Mills Beach to Sunnyside Beach, Mornington - 16 August 2025

Text and photos: Judy Smart

Globe fish

Leatherjacket

The weather forecast was dire - howling gales, rain and hail. Being intrepid/foolish/optimistic we went ahead with our beach walk anyway. Once again, this worked out – it was certainly chilly and breezy, but dry and not too bad at all. We started at Sunnyside Beach and walked to Mills Beach, Mornington.



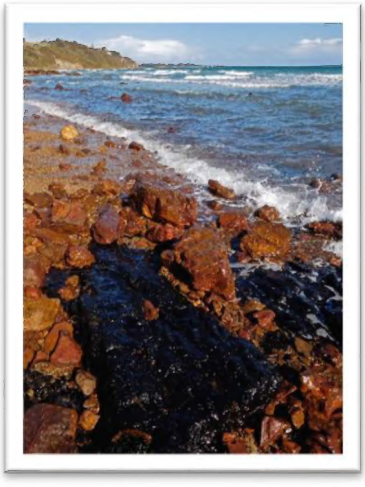
Globe fish swim bladder

I was most interested in the flotsam and jetsam. There were a great number of Globe fish (Porcupine fish - Diodon nicthemerus), very recently washed up. There are always a few washed up after rough weather, but I had never seen so many. They are poisonous and can exude a skin toxin, so we didn't handle them. There was also a Leatherjacket, and a Globe fish swim bladder, which looks like a plastic toy, but allows the fish to adjust its buoyancy at various depths.

As always, there were vast amounts of rubbish, including parking fines from Stonnington and Moonee Valley councils. They had certainly travelled a long way!

Mills Beach to Sunnyside Beach, Mornington - 16 August 2025

Text and photos: Heather Ducat



Coal seam, Sunnyside beach

The August excursion was an interesting rock scramble and beach walk along the coast from Sunnyside, Mt. Eliza to Mills Beach, Mornington. The dire forecast for a cold, showery day with hail did not eventuate; it was nice and sunny with an invigorating, stiff south-westerly wind off The Bay. William assisted with a car shuffle to Sunnyside Beach.

Iron-rich Baxter sandstone

The coast between Frankston and Dromana is dramatic and complex with examples of cliff collapse, ongoing activity on a fault line and a variety of geological strata ranging in age from 380 million year old Mt. Eliza Granite to Baxter Sandstone, dated from about 6-4 million years old.

Midden & old shore platform, Earimil Beach

The falling tide gave access to the shore platform at Sunnyside where a coal seam, formed about 18 million years ago, is exposed. Also visible is an outcrop of weathered Older Volcanics Basalt, dated at 50-40 million years old. The shore is littered with large chunks of gritty, colourful Baxter Sandstone, deposited by rivers. The narrow rocky shore is backed by eroding low cliffs of soft Gellibrand Marl (clay). To the south of the carpark and Manmangur Creek is a cliff of granite where the rock is fractured and sheared by the stress and movement of the nearby Manyung Fault. The shore platform is composed of granite cobbles and gravel from a former beach and shore platform that now sits 2 metres above the current high water mark; evidence of a higher sea level about 6000 years ago. Just to the south of Caraar Creek is a prominent cliff of sharp, fractured granite, negotiated by a short climb and some rock-hopping between waves. This outcrop marks the end of the Mt. Eliza Granite exposure that stretches for about 1.4 km to Mills Beach East. The sandy shore is backed by steep, unstable cliffs of Baxter Sandstone, on the flanks of Beleura Hill.

Granite cobble shore near Caraar Rocks

Mills beach from Caraar rocks

Shattered granite cliff, Sunnyside beach

After lunch at Mills Beach, we detoured to Earimil Beach at Mt. Eliza to see one of the numerous aboriginal shell middens perched on top of an old shore platform of rounded sandstone pebbles. This has been a pleasant picnic location for thousands of years.

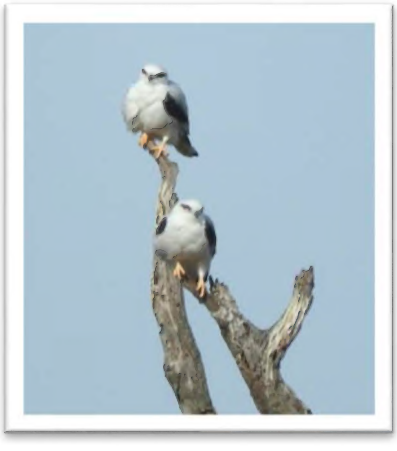
Our route along the shore and the strong wind limited our bird list to only 7: Silver and Pacific Gulls, Little Pied Cormorant, White Ibis, Crested Tern, Superb Fairywren & Common Mynah; plus a few 'little squeaky things' in thick bush at Earimil Beach, that we couldn't see well enough to identify.

Birding reports

Birding at Braeside Park - 2 June 2025

Text and photos: Lee Denis

It was a much reduced birding party which met at the Redgum picnic area, at the Governors Road entrance, on a fine, sunny but cool day. Actually, a biting wind seemed to go straight through us at the start! It did warm up later. Water levels were extremely low; the wetland was completely dry, while the ponds were at the lowest level we had ever seen, and not surprisingly bird numbers were well down on previous visits. I don't know if the low water levels were a factor, but the duck population was dominated by Freckled Ducks. Only a couple of Chestnut Teal and Pacific Black Ducks were in evidence, but on one bank we counted 20 Freckled Duck. Probably the next most abundant were Pink-eared Ducks. Hardly a Coot was to be seen, one Darter, a few Cormorants (Great, Little Black and Little Pied), a few Pelicans, and a gaggle of Swans. The only raptors we saw was a pair of Black-shouldered Kites.



Black-shouldered kites

Bush birds were just as scarce as waterbirds—the most prominent, i.e. making their presence known, were Pied Currawongs and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. We were surprised to see the species tally reach 45 for the day, with the addition of some Cattle Egrets in a neighbouring paddock.

The most surprising sighting to me was of two Soft Tree Ferns, on a small stream on the eastern, bushland, side of the park.

Birding at Patterson River - 7 July 2025

Text and photos: Bett Mitchell, except for Australian Hobby, taken by Lee Denis.

Nine members gathered at Patterson River for a walk along the Dandenong Creek Trail which runs between the Eastern Treatment Plant and the Patterson River. We were fortunate with the weather with a lovely sunny calm day.

A large group of birds were roosting on the rocks under the Wells Road underpass. Great Egret, Pelican, Chestnut, Hoary headed Grebe and Little and Pied Cormorant were observed. A male Musk Duck was out of the water and roosting on the rocks which I felt was unusual as we usually only see them in the water with their stiff tail erect and diving in search of crustaceans and small fish. A Darter with its wings spread and perched on a stick was also observed.

Further along looking out over the treatment plant we added, Australian Hobby, a pair of Black shouldered Kites and a Swamp Harrier. Black Swans and Silver Gulls were seen at the edge of the ponds.

Bush birds were few in number but Spiny cheeked Honeyeater, White plumed Honeyeater, Grey Currawong, Superb Fairy Wren, Red browed Finch, Red Wattlebirds and Welcome Swallows were added to the list.

A large group of ducks were congregated where the river narrows into the creek and we were delighted to see good numbers of Pink-eared Ducks and a few Hardhead amongst hundreds of Chestnut Teal, a few Grey Teal, Coots and Pacific Black Duck.

Darter

Australian hobby

Musk duck

Lunch was enjoyed basking in the winter sun at the boat ramp on the Patterson River.

Birding at Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve - 4 August 2025

Text and photos: Sue Brabender, except for fungi, taken by Sharon Clifford.

Golden whistler

At 10am on Monday 4th August nine members met at the Langwarrin Flora & Fauna Reserve. We enjoyed a walk in very pleasant winter weather, a sunny 17/18 degrees, with a breeze.

Scented sundew

Starting on the SEC break we noted clearing of land behind residential properties, likely clearing firebreaks before the coming Summer. White-eared and New Holland Honeyeaters and Eastern Yellow Robins were seen as we moved along here. We turned into the reserve taking the Stringybark Track through to the Centre Break. A small flock of Varied Sitella, an Eastern Spinebill, Grey Shrike-thrush and White-naped Honeyeaters were seen along this sandy track. We crossed the Centre Break, looking and listening intently in between chatting to one another and spotted a male Golden Whistler, resplendent in his golden plumage. We again saw a small flock of 5 or 6 Varied Sitella. They are quick moving and elusive. Spotted Pardalotes were heard but were well hidden in the tree tops amongst the leaves. Chattering was heard and Craig spotted Brown-headed Honeyeaters. These delightful little birds kept our group enthralled as they foraged for insects, pollen and nectar in the trees beside the Aquaduct Track.

Horse-dropping fungus

There were signs of Short-beaked Echidnas everywhere, with many holes dug during their search for ants, but no Echidnas were seen. The most prevalent fungus species was the Horse-dropping fungus *(Pisolithus)*, Scented Sundew (*Drosera aberrans)* were growing alongside the tracks, however no-one chose to get down low to smell their flowers. A few orchids growing alongside the Aquaduct Track were spotted by Judy.

Relaxing after the walk while eating lunch gave us the opportunity to keep discussing bird species seen and holidays enjoyed. The outing concluded at 1:30pm with a total of twenty-one bird species seen.

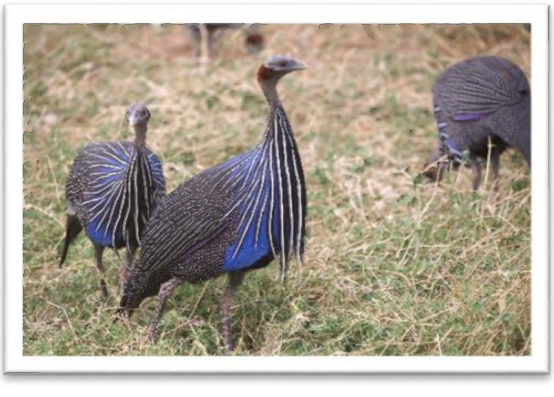
Presentations

Roger Standen, Wildlife Interactions in Kenya – 11 June meeting

Text: Judy Smart **Photos:** Roger Standen

Roger has made two trips to Kenya, in 2004 and 2024. This time he had a personal guide, so that he didn't have to rush past wildlife. There was plenty to see, not just the Big 5; they saw a great variety of animals, birds and insects.

One of the differences between black and white rhinos is their diet. The black graze on shrubs, the white on grass. Hippos weigh 3 tonnes, but can still run at 30kph, making them very dangerous, like buffalo and elephants. They were lucky to see both cheetah and leopards. The family of impala they saw had one male to 35 females, making for a very busy and stressful life for the male, defending his harem. When we see photos of the wildlife, we don't see what is behind the photographer - one of Rog's photos was of 14 safari vehicles stopped to look at the wildlife.



Mt Kilimanjaro has lost 80% of its snow cover since 1912, and is predicted to be ice free by 2033. The snow melt supplies water to Amboseli Swamp, so the ripple effect of climate change will be a calamity for the animals which visit the Swamp.

Masai mara means 'spotted', referring to the scattered trees across the plains. The birds there were spectacular, such as the superb starling and the lilac breasted roller. Another fabulous bird was the Secretary bird, which is a raptor and hunts reptiles. The Vulturine Guinea Fowl is a spectacular blue, much more interesting than the guinea fowl we see here. Oxpecker birds travel on all the animals, feeding on them.
Army ants travel in great numbers during their nomadic phase. They are stationary while they lay eggs, then after the eggs hatch, they carry the larvae, looking for food. Kenyan goannas are Varanus, like the Australian goannas, but of different species. We don't have chameleons though. It was a feast of wildlife, for Roger and for us.

Jared Jones, Fungi of Greens Bush – 13 August meeting

Text: Judy Smart

Jared and his cousin Sian are brand new members, who came along for their first meeting in June. So, it is remarkable to have Jared speaking to us this month. Jared has only been studying fungi for a year, and it is a very large subject, so the huge amount of knowledge he has accumulated is the result of intense study and passion.

Jared showed us the characteristics for distinguishing the different groups of fungi. On top of the fungi there may be warts, patches, scales or smooth. Underneath the top there may be gills or pores. Some stalks have rings. Boletes have patterning on the stem- reticulation. The substrate the fungi is growing on is another clue; it could be soil, live wood or rotting wood. Their nutrition type can be parasitic, saprotrophic or mycorrhizal.
The best known group for the general observer is Agaricales, the classic mushroom. Examples are the genera of Cortinarius and Russula, and species such as Fly Agaric, Amanita muscaria. Other species discussed were:

- Boletales - boletes - have pores under the cap instead of gills. An example seen at Greens Bush is the very large Salmon Gum fungus.
- Phallales – stinkhorns, as the name suggests, are horn shaped and smelly.
- Polyporales – have pores and no stem and grow on wood, for example, white punk.
- Lycoperdaceae – puffballs, some of which are edible.
- Sclerodermataceae – earthballs.
- Geastrales – earthstars.
- Hymenopelis gigaspora - the rooting shank, has a brown cap and its interesting characteristic is its long taproot-like stem, which can grow to 30cm under the ground.

Some of the more striking fungi seen were: Cortinarius austrovenetus, which is olive green, Horsedung fungus – Pisolethis genus, the Graceful Parasol, and the find of the day: the beautiful Mauve Splitting Waxcap (Porpolomopsis lewelliniae).

Jared also showed photos of mosses and lichens, particularly coral lichen, which covers large areas of ground.

Travel reports

Indonesia Butterflies and Moths

Text and photos: Graeme Rigg

I had been able to travel to Jakarta in Indonesia in October 2024 and recently June 2025.

On the October trip I travelled up to mountains of the Bandung Region south east of Jakarta and stayed in Lembang, approximately 1250 metres above sea level. The temperature was in the mid-thirties with very high humidity. The June trip was to the Bogor Region south of Jakarta which is 265 metres above sea level. The temperature was in the low thirties and the humidity was still high.

The conditions in both areas seemed to be conducive for butterflies and moths. Observations were made as part of our general touring, with 28 observations and 19 species of Butterflies and 10 observations and 9 species of Moths – see below.

Neptis hylas	Common Sailer	Genus Laelia	
Papilio memnon	Great Mormon Swallowtail	Graphium sarpedon	Common Bluebottle
Graphium agamemnon	Tailed Jay	Catopsilia Pomona	Lemon Migrant
Subtribe Spilosomina		Herpetogramma licarsisalis	Grass Webworm Moth
Delias periboea		Delias hyparete	Painted Jezebel
Faunis canens	Common Faun	Doleschallia bisaltide	Autumn Leaf
Mycalesis sudra		Euploea phaenareta	Large Crow Butterfly
Euthalia aconthea	Common Baron	Parnara bada	Oriental Straight Swift
Elymnias hypermnestra	Common Palmfly	Nemapogon granella	European Grain Moth
Leptosia nina	Psyche	Amata huebneri	Hübner's Wasp Moth
Genus Ypthima	Ring Butterflies	Genus Rhypotoses	
Family Psychidae	Bagworm Moths	Cyrestis lutea	
Hypolimnas bolina	Great Eggfly	Tanaecia palguna	Long-lined Viscount
Genus Macaria		Genus Sphingognatha	

Genus Rhypotoses

Cyrestis lutea

Tanaecia palguna

Papilio memnon

Observations

The Gurdies Nature Conservation Reserve - 2 August 2025

Text and photos: Graeme Rigg

It was a bright sunny day with some small patches of cloud but with an 80% of no rain predicted it was a good day for a walk. Not having been to the Gurdies Nature Conservation Reserve before, but driven past it countless times heading for other destinations, it was decided that we make a trip to the Reserve. Having recently purchased the book “The Guide to Orchid Paradise – The Gurdies Conservation Nature Reserve” by Dick Wettenhall only added to the decision.

The Reserve is located on the Bass Highway at Pioneer Bay just before Grantville. There is a small off the highway car park that provides access to the reserve via the Bass Highway track. We took the Bass Hwy track heading south towards Grantville then headed up the Central Track to the junction with Sand Mine Valley Track and headed down that track to the Bass Hwy track and back to the car park.

The walk produced 50 observations of 35 taxa of birds, plants and fungi for me with the observation photos being uploaded onto my iNaturalist profile (Gizz) with several being new species to my list. Two of particular interests are the Horny Cone-Bush (*Isopogon ceratophyllus*) and the Cobra Greenhood (*Pterostylis grandiflora*). The Horny Cone-Bush is listed within iNaturalist as being EN (Conservation Status: endangered (EN) (IUCN Red List) and the Cobra Greenhood is listed within iNaturalist as being VU (Conservation Status: Endangered in Victoria, AU (Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action).

Horny Cone-Bush - Description (Source Wikipedia)

Isopogon ceratophyllus is a prickly shrub, growing to 15–100 cm (6–40 in) tall and to 120 cm (4 ft) across. The oval to round flower heads, known as inflorescences, appear between July and January, and are around 3 cm in diameter (see above).

Cobra Greenhood – Description (Source Wikipedia)

Pterostylis grandiflora (Cobra Greenhood) is a terrestrial, perennial, deciduous, herb with an underground tuber and when not flowering, a rosette of four to nine egg-shaped leaves (see above). Each leaf is 4–20 mm long and 3–10 mm wide. Flowering plants have a single flower 27–35 mm long and 17–23 mm wide borne on a spike 150–150 mm high with four to nine stem leaves wrapped around it. The flowers are white with green and deep red-brown stripes and markings. The dorsal sepal and petals are fused, forming a hood or "galea" over the column. The dorsal sepal curves forward with a thread-like tip 3–5 mm long. The lateral sepals are erect and held closely

against the galea and there is a broad, flat, platform-like protruding sinus between their bases. The labellum is 17–20 mm long, about 3 mm wide and reddish-brown and protrudes above the sinus. Flowering occurs from May to August.

Tyabb Foreshore Reserve – 8 August 2025

Text and photos: Graeme Rigg

A sunny afternoon walk in the Tyabb Foreshore Reserve revealed an interesting find for me, not having seen this species of fungi before - *Neobarya agaricicola.*

I spotted what was a very small fungi possibly 3 centimetres tall with small yellow growths on it. Loading it up to iNaturalist revealed that it was in fact another fungi on another species of fungi.

The following is an abridged version of an article taken from:
https://plantiary.com/mushroom/neobarya-agaricicola_2614.html

Neobarya agaricicola is a species of fungus that belongs to the family of mycoparasitic fungi. This organism is notable for its unique life cycle and its interaction with other fungi, particularly its parasitic relationship.

Habitat and Ecology

***Distribution*:** This species is often found in woodland environments, typically growing in association with decaying organic matter or specific host fungi. Its distribution can vary but is often localised in nutrient-rich areas.

***Mycoparasitism*:** Neobarya agaricicola is particularly interesting due to its mycoparasitic nature, where it feeds on other fungi, such as members of the genus Agaricus. This relationship demonstrates the complex interactions in forest ecosystems, where competition for resources and predation are key survival strategies.

***Ecological Role*:** Neobarya agaricicola plays a significant role in nutrient cycling and decomposition in forest ecosystems. Its mycoparasitic behavior contributes to the regulation of fungal populations, balancing ecosystems.

Contact Us

Peninsula Field Naturalists Club Inc CAV: A0010510T

Meetings
- Held on the second Wednesday of each month.
- 16 High Street, Frankston (Frankston Uniting Church, Blue Room).
- 7.30pm start.
- Visitors always welcome.

Activities
- Monthly field trips are on the Saturday following the monthly meeting.
- Birding excursions are on the first Monday of the month.
- The current Program of Activities can be found on our website Schedule page.

Further information
- Website: https://www.peninsulafieldnaturalists.org.au
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- Facebook: Peninsula Field Nats

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